

103^D CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. 1997

To amend title 13, United States Code, to require that the Secretary of Commerce produce and publish, at least every 2 years, current data relating to the incidence of poverty in the United States.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 25 (legislative day, FEBRUARY 22), 1994

Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. MOYNIHAN, Mrs. KASSEBAUM, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. RIEGLE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. BRADLEY, Mr. MACK, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. DECONCINI, Mr. JOHNSTON, and Mr. WELLSTONE) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 13, United States Code, to require that the Secretary of Commerce produce and publish, at least every 2 years, current data relating to the incidence of poverty in the United States.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Poverty Data Improve-
5 ment Act of 1994”.

6 **SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds that—

1 (1) more than \$20,000,000,000 is provided to
2 State and local governments each year, under var-
3 ious Federal programs, based on data relating to in-
4 come and poverty status;

5 (2) the infrequency with which such data are
6 collected diminishes their reliability and usefulness
7 for public policy purposes;

8 (3) the relative lack of intercensal data can pre-
9 vent Federal funds from reaching those populations
10 that are in greatest need, as reflected in the dra-
11 matic and often unforeseen shifts in the way Federal
12 funds are reallocated following each decennial cen-
13 sus;

14 (4) the more frequent collection of data relating
15 to income and poverty status would allow policy-
16 makers to target scarce program funds more effec-
17 tively and in a more timely fashion; and

18 (5) the cost of producing the data needed to
19 achieve the ends described in paragraph (4) would
20 be small compared to the amounts that are distrib-
21 uted based on such data.

22 **SEC. 3. REQUIREMENT.**

23 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter IV of chapter 5 of
24 title 13, United States Code, is amended by inserting after
25 section 181 the following:

1 **“§ 181A. Data relating to poverty**

2 “(a) The Secretary, to the extent feasible, shall
 3 produce and publish for each State, county or borough,
 4 and local unit of general purpose government, including
 5 Alaska native villages, for which data are compiled in the
 6 most recent census of population taken under section
 7 141(a), and for each school district, data relating to the
 8 incidence of poverty. Such data may be produced by means
 9 of sampling, estimation, or any other method that the Sec-
 10 retary determines will produce current, comprehensive,
 11 and reliable data.

12 “(b) Data under this section—

13 “(1) shall include—

14 “(A) for each school district, the number
 15 of children age 5 to 17, inclusive, in families
 16 below the poverty level; and

17 “(B) for each State and county referred to
 18 in subsection (a), the number of individuals age
 19 65 or over below the poverty level; and

20 “(2) shall be published in 1996 and at least
 21 every second year thereafter.

22 “(c)(1) If reliable data could not otherwise be pro-
 23 duced, the Secretary may, for purposes of subsection
 24 (b)(1)(A), aggregate school districts, but only to the extent
 25 necessary to achieve reliability.

1 “(2) Any data produced under this subsection shall
 2 be appropriately identified and shall be accompanied by
 3 a detailed explanation as to how and why aggregation was
 4 used (including the measures taken to minimize any
 5 such aggregation).

6 “(d) If the Secretary is unable to produce and publish
 7 the data required under this section for any State, county,
 8 local unit of general purpose government, or school district
 9 in any year specified in subsection (b)(2), a report shall
 10 be submitted by the Secretary to the President of the Sen-
 11 ate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, not
 12 later than 90 days before the commencement of the follow-
 13 ing year, enumerating each government or school district
 14 excluded and giving the reasons for the exclusion.

15 “(e) In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall
 16 use the same criteria relating to poverty as were used in
 17 compiling the then most recent census of population taken
 18 under section 141(a) (subject to such periodic adjustments
 19 as may be necessary to compensate for inflation and other
 20 similar factors).”.

21 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-
 22 tions for chapter 5 of title 13, United States Code, is
 23 amended by inserting after the item relating to section
 24 181 the following:

“181A. Data relating to poverty.”.